

The Byzantine Empire

Sir Charles Oman



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Fifty years ago the word "Byzantine" was used as a synonym for all that was corrupt and decadent, and the tale of the East-Roman Empire was dismissed by modern historians as depressing and monotonous. The great Gibbon had branded the successors of Justinian and Heraclius as a series of vicious weaklings, and for several generations no one dared to contradict him. Two books have served to undeceive the English reader, the monumental work of Finlay, published in 1856, and the more modern volumes of Mr. Bury, which appeared in 1889. Since they have written, the Byzantines no longer need an apologist, and the great work of the East-Roman Empire in holding back the Saracen, and in keeping alive throughout the Dark Ages the lamp of learning, is beginning to be realized. (Wikipedia) Oman starts with the arrival of Greek traders to establish a colony and ends

"So the cry that God was great and Mohammed his prophet rang through the dome where thirty generations of patriarchs had celebrated the Holy Mysteries, and all Europe and Asia knew the end was come of the longest tale of Empire that Christendom has yet seen. Finis".

Read by LibriVox volunteers. Total running time: 9:18:34

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